STATE OF UTAH GENERAL OUTLOOK
Jan 1, 2007

SUMMARY

It is snowing outside as we begin the water supply outlook reports for 2007, visibility is less than a quarter mile and the large fluffy flakes are piling up ready for the shovel. This is a very welcome sight even with the prospect of some hard labor later as conditions have been relatively dry for snow accumulation this season. October got the ball rolling in style with precipitation ranging from 116% to 242% of average which brought soil moisture values across the state up substantially. November wasn't too bad with precipitation in the 90% range but mild temperatures seemed to slow significant snow accumulation even at higher elevations. December continued the slide with precipitation near 69% of average and snowpacks that are below average. After a great start, soil moisture values have been steady to slightly decreasing over the past few months but for the most part are still in excellent condition. The Bear and the Weber Rivers are in particularly good shape at 67% and 62% of saturation. The Provo, Uintahs, southeast Utah and the Sevier are all between 40% and 50% of saturation. Southwest Utah has the lowest soil moisture condition at 33% of saturation, much less than the remainder of the state. Snowpacks range from 69% over southeastern Utah to near 80% of average on the Bear, Weber, Sevier and southwest Utah. The Provo watershed has snowpacks near 73% of normal. This is about 71% of the snowpack of last year. Precipitation for December ranged from 60% on the Provo Basin to 118% over southwest Utah. This brings the seasonal precipitation, (Oct-Dec) to 103%. Reservoir storage ranges from 34% on the Bear to 89% of capacity on the Provo. Statewide reservoir storage is at 67% of capacity, down 6% from last year. The Bear River basin has relatively poor reservoir storage at 34% but is significantly improved from years past. In general, most areas of the state have excellent reservoir carryover. General water supply conditions range from below to near average. Streamflow forecasts range from 52% to 91% of average. Surface Water Supply Indices range from 23% on the Bear River, to 84% on the west side of the Uintah Basin.

SNOWPACK

January first snowpacks as measured by the NRCS SNOTEL system range from 69% in southeast Utah to 89% on the Uintahs. The Bear, Weber, Sevier and southwest Utah area all near 80% and the Provo is at 73% of average. To reach average conditions by April 1, we need 110% to 120% of average accumulation. The probability of getting this accumulation ranges between 25% and 42%. It is very early in the snow accumulation year and any outcome is possible.

PRECIPITATION

Mountain precipitation during December was much below normal at 69% of average statewide. Precipitation was lowest over northern Utah (60%-64%) and highest over southern areas (67%-118%). This brings the seasonal accumulation (Oct-Dec) to 103% of average statewide and ranges from 92% on the Bear to 123% over southeastern Utah.

RESERVOIRS

Storage in 41 of Utah's key irrigation reservoirs is at 67% of capacity. This is an increase of 2% from last year. Reservoirs across the State have been making steady gains in storage. Bear Lake really is the last reservoir to remain in an extremely low condition due to the prolonged drought.

STREAMFLOW

Snowmelt streamflows are expected to have a wide range from much below average to near average across the state of Utah this year. Forecast streamflows range from 52% on the Beaver River to 91% of average for South Willow Creek nr Grantsville and Big Brush Creek abv Red Fleet. Most flows are forecast to be in the 60% to 85% range.